

Please amend the application as follows:

In the Claims

~~Please cancel Claims 23-29.~~

Please amend Claims 1-20.

“Marked Up Version of Amendments” (pages i - iii).

1. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding a polypeptide having improved thermostable cellulase activity and at least about 85% identity compared to SEQ ID NO: 2, wherein said nucleic acid is truncated such that one or more of the amino acid residues corresponding to position one to about position 40 in the corresponding SEQ ID NO: 2 are deleted in the polypeptide encoded by said nucleic acid molecule.
2. (Amended) A nucleic acid construct comprising the nucleic acid molecule of Claim 1 operably linked to a regulatory sequence.
3. (Amended) A host cell comprising the nucleic acid construct of Claim 2.
4. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding a polypeptide having improved thermostable cellulase activity compared to its full-length native counterpart, wherein said polypeptide comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2, wherein one or more of the amino acid residues from position one to about position 40 are deleted.
5. (Amended) A nucleic acid construct comprising the nucleic acid molecule of Claim 4 operably linked to a regulatory sequence.

6. (Amended) A host cell comprising the nucleic acid construct of Claim 5.
7. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding a polypeptide having improved thermostable cellulase activity compared to its full-length native counterpart, said nucleic acid molecule having a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:
nucleotides 52-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3, nucleotides 55-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3, nucleotides 58-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3, nucleotides 61-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3, nucleotides 64-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3, nucleotides 67-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3, nucleotides 70-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3, nucleotides 73-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3, nucleotides 76-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3, nucleotides 79-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3 and nucleotides 82-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3.
8. (Amended) A nucleic acid construct comprising the nucleic acid of Claim 7 operably linked to a regulatory sequence.
9. (Amended) A host cell comprising the nucleic acid construct of Claim 8.
10. (Amended) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of Claim 7 wherein the nucleic acid has the sequence of nucleotides 52-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3.
11. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding a polypeptide having improved thermostable cellulase activity compared to its native full-length counterpart, said nucleic acid having a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of: nucleotides 85-783 SEQ ID NO: 3,
nucleotides 88-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3, nucleotides 91-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3,
nucleotides 94-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3, nucleotides 97-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3,
nucleotides 100-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3, nucleotides 103-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3,
nucleotides 106-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3, nucleotides 109-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3 and
nucleotides 112-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3.

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12. (Amended) A nucleic acid construct comprising the nucleic acid molecule of Claim 11 operably linked to a regulatory sequence.
13. (Amended) A host cell comprising the nucleic acid construct of Claim 12.
14. (Amended) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of Claim 11 wherein the nucleic acid sequence comprises the sequence of nucleotides 112-783 of SEQ ID NO: 3.
15. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding a fusion protein comprising a thermostable cellulase having improved thermostable cellulase activity and at least about 85% identity compared to SEQ ID NO: 2 and a fusion partner, said thermostable cellulase is a variant of a glycosyl hydrolase of family 12, and wherein said nucleic acid molecule is truncated such that one or more of the amino acid residues corresponding to position one to about position 40 in SEQ ID NO: 2 are deleted in the fusion protein encoded by said nucleic acid molecule.
16. (Amended) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 15 encoding a fusion protein comprising a thermostable cellulase and a fusion partner, said thermostable cellulase comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 wherein said one or more of the amino acid residues from position one to about position 40 are deleted.
17. (Amended) A nucleic acid construct comprising the nucleic acid molecule of Claim 15 operably linked to a regulatory sequence.
18. (Amended) A host cell comprising the nucleic acid construct of Claim 17.
19. (Amended) A method for producing a thermostable cellulase comprising maintaining the host cell of Claim 18 under conditions suitable for expression of said nucleic acid construct, whereby said thermostable cellulase is produced.

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